

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 64

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Donna Hilley of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Donna Hilley of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, a highly respected and admired businesswoman in the entertainment industry, Donna Hilley served for many years as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Sony/ATV Tree International Publishing; and

WHEREAS, a native of Birmingham, Alabama, Donna Hilley arrived in Nashville in the late 1950s as a typist for WKDA Radio. After a short tenure in public relations, she was hired by Tree, the music publisher; and

WHEREAS, over the next thirty years under her astute leadership, Tree quadrupled its volume of held song copyrights, acquiring such major songwriting catalogs as Merle Haggard, Jim Reeves, and Buck Owens; and

WHEREAS, one of the nation's top country publishers, Ms. Hilley's tenure at Tree also saw the company expand into film, television, Broadway shows, and commercials as it significantly raised its already high regard in the entertainment industry; and

WHEREAS, renown for her negotiation acumen and alacrity, Donna Hilley orchestrated more than sixty acquisitions, including the \$157 million deal to acquire legendary Acuff-Rose publishing and rights to some 55,000 songs; and

WHEREAS, the first woman elected to the ASCAP board of directors, Ms. Hilley played a primary role in the December 1995 merger of ATV Music Publishing and Sony into Sony/ATV Music Publishing as the company became the second-largest music publisher in the world; and

WHEREAS, considered by her print reports as one of the ten most powerful women in Country Music, Ms. Hilley would serve as President and Chief Executive Officer of the new company from 1995 until her retirement in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Donna Hilley is survived by her husband, Ray Hilley, her brother, Jim Whitten, her sister, Diane Whitten-Vile, her daughters, Vickie Arney, Debbie Tenpenny, and Whitney Stewart, and four grandchildren and a host of extended family members and dear friends; and

WHEREAS, Donna Hilley leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a truly remarkable woman who took great pride in making her community and State a better place for all, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the extraordinary life of Donna Hilley; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Donna Hilley, reflecting fondly upon her resolute character, her unrivaled years of admirable service to generations of songwriters, and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Donna Hilley.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the family of Mrs. Hilley, with this final resolving clause omitted.